

Making Plans for the Summer? If so, plan to attend Maine's 1st Occupational Safety and Health Research Symposium

THE MAINE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (MDOL) is sponsoring the first Maine research symposium on occupational safety and health. The two-day symposium, *Integrating Research and Practice in Occupational Safety and Health*, will be held in Bethel on August 7 and 8, 2000.

The symposium is an opportunity to share new ideas and practices for preventing and controlling occupational injuries and illnesses. The event will bring together researchers, educators, employers, and occupational health and safety professionals from around the country to discuss

the latest research on methods of improving workplace safety and health. Presentations will reflect a broad spectrum of academic and workplace-based research.

NIOSH Presentations

Researchers from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) will make keynote presentations. Dr. Mary Lynn Woebkenberg, acting deputy director of the

NIOSH Division of Biomedical and Behavioral Sciences, and Dr. Linda M. Goldenhar, a behavioral scientist and research team leader for the NIOSH National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA), will be the featured speakers.

Additional presentations will address musculoskeletal disorders, carbon monoxide, workplace culture and other topics.

Research Agenda for Maine

The Bureau of Labor Standards (BLS) is taking the initiative to develop an occupational safety and health research agenda for Maine, which is reflective of the National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA). NORA is a framework to guide occupational safety and health research, which arose out of a need to address ongoing changes in the U.S. workplace and workforce.

Based on the input of hundreds of organizations and individuals, NORA determined 21 research priorities, grouped into the broad categories of "Disease and Injury," "Work Environment and Workforce," and "Research Tools and Approaches." Since 1996, NORA has stimulated new research in these priority areas, directing studies to areas with the highest likelihood of reducing workplace injury and illness.

Through the symposium, the Bureau of Labor Standards expects to identify new research partners and integrate various ideas and perspectives in order to define the occupational safety and health research needs specific to Maine.

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Why is research important?

Research is the foundation for training programs and prevention efforts. According to Kim C. Lim, Ph.D., MPH, who directs research activities for BLS, research reveals the health and safety hotspots, "Research allows us to take a proactive approach to prevention. Data show us where the problems are and who is getting hurt. Then we can look into the best ways to control or eliminate these problems through education and training."

Realities of the modern workplace—part-time and temporary work, reduced job security, an increasingly diverse workforce, advanced technologies all have an impact on health and safety. Developments such as these call for new approaches to the work environment. Through research findings, organizations can direct limited resources where they will have the greatest impact.

The Maine Research Symposium

For more information about the Maine Occupational Safety and Health Research Symposium, go to <http://janus.state.me.us/labor/bls/blsmain.htm> or call 1-877-SAFE-345. Registration materials will be available in May.

Visit our booth at Maine's Fourth Annual **Blaine House Conference & Exposition for Small Businesses**

**May 22-23, 2000
Augusta Civic Center**

New OSHA Interactive Software Pinpoints Workplace Hazards, Remedies

OSHA's Hazard Awareness Advisor is designed to help employers and employees locate potential hazards in specific work environments. The advisor asks questions about activities, practices, equipment, material, conditions and policies at the workplace. Based on the responses, the software determines the hazards likely to be present, then prepares a customized report detailing OSHA standards that address those hazards.

The OSHA web site has advisors on other topics, such as asbestos, confined space, cost of injuries, etc. The advisors can be found at <http://www.osha-slc.gov/dts/osta/oshasoft/>

**The Winter 2000 issue of the
SafetyWorks! newsletter contained
several errors, for which we apologize.
The corrections follow:**

- The correct answers to the MSDS quiz are: 1.b; 2.f; 3.j; 4.e; 5.d; 6.a; 7.i; 8.g; 9.h; 10.c
- The table on page 1 is incorrect. The following table correctly shows symptoms at different parts per million (ppm) of carbon monoxide in the blood.



*For more information on carbon
monoxide poisoning call the Bureau
of Health, 287-5378, or SafetyWorks!,
1-877-SAFE-345. The following
websites may also be helpful:
OSHA: www.osha.gov
NIOSH: www.cdc.gov/niosh*

Carbon Monoxide Symptoms

40 ppm	Headache in 1-2 hours
50 ppm	OSHA Permissible Exposure Limit
80 ppm	Headache in 45 minutes; nausea, vomiting, unconsciousness in 2 hours
160 ppm	Headache in 20 minutes; nausea, vomiting, unconsciousness in 45 minutes
1500 ppm	Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health

Signs of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

1. Headache, shortness of breath, angina in coronary patients, dilation of surface vessels
2. Throbbing headache, nausea or vomiting, fatigue, irritability, difficulty concentrating
3. Severe headache, dizziness, fatigue, faintness, impaired thinking
4. Rapid breathing & heartbeat, fainting, confusion
5. Respiratory failure, collapse, convulsions, seizures, coma
6. Severe respiratory failure, extremely low blood pressure, coma
7. Rapidly fatal coma

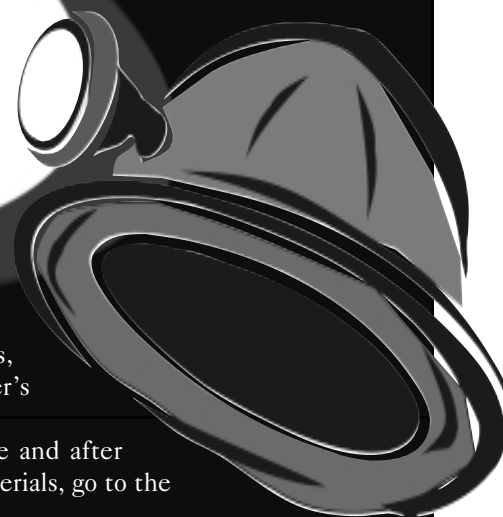
● Using natural gas powered forklifts (or other equipment) will not reduce the carbon monoxide exposure indoors. If you use forklifts indoors, use electric ones if possible.

STAY OUT—STAY ALIVE!!

Playing at mine sites may seem like harmless fun, but every year, dozens of children and adults around the country are injured or killed in accidents at active and inactive underground mines, sinkholes, pits and quarries. To increase awareness of the hazards of mine sites, SafetyWorks! is partnering with other state and federal agencies in The Mine Hazard Awareness Campaign, **Stay Out-Stay Alive**.

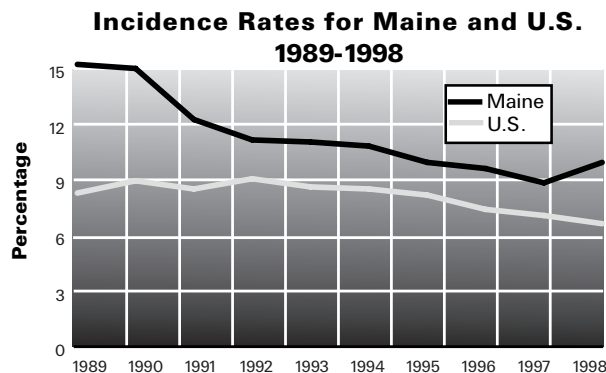
While Maine has only two active underground mines, the state is dotted with inactive mines and quarries. Abandoned underground mines often contain decaying timbers, loose rock and tunnels that can collapse at any time. They may harbor deadly and explosive gases. Old, flooded quarries can have icy temperatures, deceptive depths, and dangerous, undetected mining equipment below the water's surface.

Stay Out-Stay Alive will focus its efforts from April 16-30, the weeks before and after Earth Day, April 22. For more information, including posters and educational materials, go to the Mine Safety and Health Administration web page at <http://www.msha.gov>.



Injury and Illness Rates Increase

According to the Maine Department of Labor, the rate of OSHA-recordable injuries and illnesses in private sector workplaces in Maine for 1998 was 9.7 cases per 100 full-time workers. This is an 11 percent increase from the record low 1997 rate of 8.7 cases per 100 full-time workers. The Maine injury and illness rate remains above the national average, which was 6.7 cases per 100 in 1998. Detailed information on the rates, which employers can use to target problem areas for their industries, can be found in the report *Occupational Injuries and Illnesses in Maine, 1998*. For a free copy, call the Bureau of Labor Standards at 624-6400.

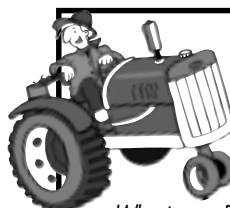


Articles for **SafetyWorks!** are written by individual authors and are not necessarily products of the Bureau of Labor Standards (BLS) or its editors. Information contained in the articles should not be seen as a substitute for policy or for regulations.

The editors are Lynne Lamstein, director of outreach and education and Jonathan Lepoff, staff development coordinator. You may reach them by calling 624-6400. For more information about SafetyWorks!, use our toll-free number: **1-877-SAFE-345**. TTY 1-800-794-1110. e-mail: webmaster_bls@state.me.us

Transportation Safety Conference

The Fourth Annual Transportation Safety Conference is set for April 27, 2000, at the Augusta Civic Center. Conference sessions serve to update safety advocates throughout northern New England on the latest transportation safety issues and strategies. Topics include road rage, defensive driving, emergency response technologies, traffic safety education, and many others. For more information contact Michelle van Haagen, Maine Bureau of Insurance, 624-8421, or Tracey Praul, Federal Highway Administration, 622-8350 (ext. 16).



You're Invited to Be Safe on the Farm, Farm Safety Day Camps

- What:** Fun-filled day of learning about safety around tractors, ATVs, water, chemicals, animals, and lawn-mowers.
- Who:** Children 5-12 years old who live on, work at, or visit farms.
- When:** May 6, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. (call for more dates & locations)
- Where:** Windsor Fairgrounds
- Extras:** Each child will get lunch, snacks, and a camp tee shirt.
- Cost:** No charge. Parents are encouraged to volunteer for the day.
- Sponsors:** Progressive Farmer Magazine and Maine Bureau of Health, Agricultural Safety and Health Program

For more information and to register: Karen Hatch Gagne at 1-800-287-1481 or Joyce Roy at 287-6814. Registration is required.

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Spring 2000

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Why do Research—and Why do it Now?

The data is in, and while the number of lost time injuries statewide is still significantly lower than it was in the early 1990s, several trends have caught our attention:

- For the third year in a row, the number of Workers' Comp First Reports of Injury is up slightly.
- After nine years of decline, the number and rate of OSHA recordable illnesses and injuries in Maine are on the rise.
- Maine's OSHA Incidence Rate (recordable cases per 100 workers) is still significantly higher (9.3) than the US average (6.7).

- While there has been only a slight increase in injuries resulting in "days away from work" in the past year, from 1992 to 1999 there was a steady and significant increase in injuries that result in "restricted work."

The data and research findings available through SafetyWorks! can help you direct your safety efforts. To find out about exciting new research we can all use to keep Maine's injury and illness data moving in the right direction, join us at the first Maine Occupational Safety & Health Research Symposium in August.



Alan C. Hinsey, Director
Bureau of Labor Standards